REMARKS

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-92 are now pending in this application.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-92 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. (USPN 7,228,339) in view of Iwamura (USPN 6,807,28).

The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The present invention relates to an image processing method, an image processing apparatus, and an information processing apparatus for preventing the unintentional copying, printing, or facsimile transmission of a confidential portion in a document, without restricting the copying and the like of other part(s) of the document.

On the other hand, Yamamoto et al. is directed to an information storage output system for outputting the whole of each image data stored in a storage server from any remote output terminal in response to an output request accessed to the storage server via a network. Iwamura is directed to an electronic apparatus/a data processing method, and is of the type for protecting the copyright of a whole of each data corresponding to various digital information by using a "digital watermark".

Clearly, Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura are directed to different fields of invention than that of the present invention. Therefore, Applicants believe that it is unreasonable that Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura are used as references with respect to the claims of the present application.

Each of independent claims 1-8, 49, 50 and 63-66 delineates, *inter alia* "extracting a specific color portion of the received color image data" and "stopping the output of the extracted specific color portion", or language substantially identical thereto. The Examiner interprets this to be confidential data in Yamamoto et al. However, while Yamamoto et al. discloses limiting access to storage server 10 by legitimate users via user IDs and passwords, both of which may be encrypted for transmission, there is nothing disclosed in Yamamoto et al. regarding extracting ***a specific color portion of received color image data*** depending upon whether or not a requestor (user) is authorized (has valid ID and password). In addition, there is nothing disclosed in Yamamoto et al. regarding stopping the ***output of the extracted specific color portion*** when performing the output processing of the color image data stored in the storage section, or alternatively, the output processing with the exclusion of a specific color (see preamble of each claim).

The Examiner has relied upon Iwamura as teaching extracting a specific color portion of the received color image data, when authentication is not completed, and stopping the output of the extracted specific color portion, referring to lines 4-9 of the abstract and to column 7, lines 33-66. However, like Yamamoto et al., Iwamura also has no specific disclosure or suggestion regarding extracting ***a specific color portion of received color image data*** depending upon whether or not a requestor is authorized. In addition, there is nothing disclosed in Iwamura regarding stopping the ***output of the extracted specific color portion*** when performing the output processing of the color image data stored in the storage section, or alternatively, the output processing with the exclusion of a specific color.

As noted above, Iwamura is directed to electronic apparatus/a data processing method of the type for protecting the copyright of a whole of each data corresponding to various digital information by using a "digital watermark". Digital watermarking is a process of embedding auxiliary information into a ***digital signal***. This is different from extracting ***a specific color portion of received color image data*** depending upon whether or not a requestor is authorized. There is also nothing in digital watermarking regarding stopping the ***output of the extracted specific color portion***

It appears that the Examiner disregards the specific terminology of "specific color portion" in interpreting claims 1-6. What is intended by "specific color portion" is fully described in the present application. No reasonable basis exits for the Examiner to disregard specific claim terminology that is fully disclosed in the present application.

Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose "authenticating the requestor of the output processing of the received color" and "extracting a specific color portion of the received color image data, and performing the output processing of the color image data without the extracted color portion, when the authentication is not completed", which are delineated in the present claims. Therefore, independent claims 1-8, 49, 50 and 63-66 are patentable over Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura.

Claims 9-12 delineate:

> said storage section comprises: a semiconductor storage device for storing the specific color portion of the received image data; and a magnetic storage device for storing a non-specific color portion other than the specific color portion of the received image data.

The Examiner refers to col. 4, lines 16-25 and Fig. 1, element 20 of Yamamoto et al. and asserts, "thus both the personnel and the image is stored in a different sections of the data storage section". However, Yamamoto et al. discloses a single storage database 20 which is typically a hard disk having a large capacity (see col. 4, lines 19-21 of Yamamoto et al.). Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose that the storage section comprises ***a semiconductor storage device*** *for storing the specific color portion of the received image data,* and ***a magnetic storage device*** *for storing a non-specific color portion other than the specific color portion of the received image data.*

With respect to claims 13-16, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "a deleting section for deleting the specific color portion which is stored in said storage section and the output processing of which is completed, once the output processing is completed".

With respect to claims 17-20, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "an encrypting section for encrypting the specific color portion to be stored into said storage section".

With regard to claims 21-24, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "a specific color reception section for receiving the specification of a specific color".

With regard to claims 25-32, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "a plurality of colors are used as said specific color".

With regard to claims 33-36, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "said specific color portion is a character portion in a specific color".

With regard to claims 37-40, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "said specific color portion is a graphics portion containing a specific color".

With regard to claims 41-44, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "said output stopping section replaces the specific color portion with a predetermined mark".

With regard to claims 45-48, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "a notifying section for notifying the output stop of the specific color portion, when the output of the specific color portion is stopped".

With regard to claims 51-56, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "said apparatus further comprises an encrypting section for encrypting the specific color portion of the image data to be transmitted".

With regard to claims 57-62, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "a transmitting section for transmitting specific color information concerning the specific color".

With regard to claims 67-70, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "said specific color information is added to the received image data, while said acquiring section acquires the specific color information added to the received image data".

With regard to claims 71-78, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "a plurality of colors are used as said specific color".

With regard to claims 79-84, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "a reception section for receiving specific color information concerning a specific color, and a converting section for converting into said specific color a predetermined color in the image data to be transmitted to said image processing apparatus".

With regard to claims 85-92, since Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura do not disclose anything regarding ***a specific color portion of received color image data***, the references do not disclose "a reception section for receiving specific color information concerning a specific color of the image data to be transmitted, and said information processing apparatus transmits the image data, and the specific color information received by said reception section".

Thus, dependent claims 9-48, 51-62 and 67-92 are patentable over Yamamoto et al. and Iwamura.

II. In view of the above, the allowance of claims 1-92 is respectfully solicited.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, applicant(s) believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Edward J. Wise (Reg. No. 34,523) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

CG/EJW/py

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By _____

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